

5 million children suffer

GENEVA (AP) — Some five million children in the Middle East risk spending their formative years in deprived circumstances because of the Gulf crisis, U.N. officials said Tuesday. Apart from children growing up in devastated Kuwait and Iraq, those in Jordan, Yemen and the Israeli-occupied territories were said to be endangered. "We can speak with alarming, grave assurance of a lost generation," said Richard Reid, director for North Africa and the Middle East at the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF). Children have less food to eat and suffer from "anxiety syndromes," especially in Kuwait, due to the crisis, he said. Immunization, infant health care and the school system are disrupted, he said. He estimated five million children under age five could become "victims of deprived circumstances" in the area, Mr. Reid and other UNICEF officials briefed reporters on efforts to restore fuel supplies, electricity, clean water and sewage systems specifically in Iraq, which he said are progressing. Jordan's economic output has dropped 40 per cent as a result of the Gulf crisis, while Yemen is hard hit by the return of one million citizens from other Gulf countries, he said.

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Israel seeks ties with China

TEL AVIV (R) — A senior Israeli official said Tuesday that he expected China and Israel to move towards establishing diplomatic relations in the next few months. Reuven Merhav, director-general of the foreign ministry, who visited Beijing earlier this month, told Israel Radio: "I think the next few months will bring very positive developments and we are talking about normalization." He called the visit private. Israel tried to keep it a secret but China broke silence last week — acknowledging for the first time that high-level visits were taking place.

Libya: Israeli aircraft provokes Libyan plane

ROME (AP) — Libya said an Israeli military plane made a "provocative manoeuvre" against a Libyan commercial jet on Tuesday. The Libyan news agency JANA said the incident occurred at midday in Cypriot air space. The Libyan Arab Airlines 727 was on a flight from Tripoli to Damascus when it was "intimidated," said the dispatch. It gave no details about the "manoeuvre" or what effect it had on the Libyan craft. JANA accused Israel of "disrespect for the well observed regulations regarding the security and safety of civilian passengers enshrined in international agreements in the civil aviation field."

Sultan Qaboos meets Schwarzkopf

MUSCAT (AP) — Sultan Qaboos met Tuesday with Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the U.S. central command, who arrived earlier in the day, the Oman News Agency reported. The agency said the meeting was attended by Omani Chief of Staff Brigadier Khames Ben Hamed Al Kalbani, but provided no details on the discussions.

Pope hopes for peace

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope John Paul has written to the U.N. secretary-general to express hope that Gulf peace negotiations do not humiliate or punish any one people, according to the text of the letter released Tuesday. He also told Javier Perez de Cuellar that churchmen were worried major Middle East issue would eclipse that of Jerusalem. The Pope wrote to the U.N. leader on March 21 to brief him on a two-day meeting he had convened at the Vatican to discuss ways of promoting peace and conciliation in the aftermath of the Gulf war. The Vatican made public the letter, which has written in French.

Firefighters plug Kuwait oil well

KUWAIT (AP) — Firefighters plugged the first of hundreds of damaged Kuwaiti oil wells Tuesday, pumping mud deep underground to "kill" a well that had spewed millions of dollars in crude. In an operation, the firefighters described as "the easiest one of the bunch," workers connected a pipe to an oil well head and forced 250 barrels of mud down a spewing oil well for about 30 minutes. The well had spewed 15,000 barrels of crude a day. There are 160 litres to the barrel. After a few belches of compressed gas and a final squirt of oil, at 2:45 p.m. (1145 GMT), mud spewed from the head, gurgling that the well had been plugged. "One down, 799 to go," mused Joe Bowden, head of Wild Well Control Co., of the United States, which handled the job.

Singapore airlines jet hijacked

SINGAPORE (R) — A hijacked Singapore Airlines Airbus with 116 passengers and 11 crew on board landed at Singapore's international airport and authorities said on Wednesday they were in contact with the four hijackers. "All 118 passengers and 11 crew are safe," the airline said. "Singapore authorities are in communication with the hijackers."

Iraq says foreign fighters behind Kurds

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ SAID Tuesday guerrillas from abroad had joined the Kurdish rebellion in northern Iraq. Rebels in the south said government forces assumed full control of all major towns in the south.

Without mentioning any of Iraq's neighbours by name, Al Thawra, newspaper of the ruling Baath Party, said some Kurdish factions had betrayed Iraq, as well as their people, by acting as tools of foreign powers.

"These suspicious Kurdish political leaders have decided to fight in the ranks of Iraq's enemies and take orders from them and cross the Iraqi border in an act of aggression," Al Thawra said.

Iraq has borders with Iran, Turkey and Syria — all of which have substantial Kurdish minorities and all of whose govern-

ments are anti-Iraq.

Referring to previous unsuccessful rebellions by Iraqi Kurds, Al Thawra said the "foolish traitors" would not achieve their aims.

Kurds, 20 per cent of Iraq's 18 million people, have been fighting for autonomy for decades.

They now claim to have seized control of almost all Kurdish areas in northern Iraq.

"These Kurdish leaders not only put themselves at the service of the imperialist, colonialist powers, but continue to take the Zionist example as an ideal," Al Thawra said.

Iraq has previously accused the United States and Britain of working to dismember Iraq by inciting the country's different religious and ethnic groups against the government.

The government newspaper Al Jounoubiyyah said on Tuesday that those who were trying to

fragment Iraq and its people "are playing a dangerous game which will result in negative effects of unpleasant consequences, not only for Iraq but for all the countries in the region, as well as international security and stability."

The paper added that any attempt to divide Iraq would fail, no matter who was behind it.

"It is not possible for such a conspiracy to succeed in Iraq... no matter the size or weight of those who back it," it said.

Iraq has openly accused Iran, with which it warred from 1980 to 1988, of involvement in the southern rebellion.

Iraq has rejected Iraq's charges that it sent soldiers across the border to attack Iraqi army units in violation of a U.N. ceasefire.

The Iranian news agency IRNA quoted a Foreign Ministry

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'Big five' reach agreement on Gulf ceasefire resolution

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The five permanent Security Council members Tuesday reached broad agreement on a new, complex Gulf war resolution clearing the way for a permanent ceasefire, Western diplomats said.

The draft resolution calls for destruction of Iraq's chemical and biological arms, bans import of nuclear weapons' material and would maintain a ban on conventional arms purchases by the government of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, according to early copies of the draft.

The United Nations would be called upon to monitor the destruction of weapons and Iraq's nuclear capability, diplomats

said. The five — Britain, China, France, the Soviet Union and the United States — reached agreement Tuesday, diplomats said, after the Soviet Union dropped its objections to some provisions, including those on destruction of chemical and other weapons. Any of the so-called "big five" can veto Security Council resolutions.

They were meeting Tuesday to put the finishing touches on the U.S.-drafted resolution and planned to present it to the other 10 council members later Tuesday or Wednesday, diplomats said. But a vote was not expected until this weekend at the earliest, the diplomats said.

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Iraq to attend Cairo meeting

CAIRO (Agencies) — Iraq announced Tuesday it would attend an Arab League meeting in Cairo this week. If so, it will be the first session of all 21 members since Iraq invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2.

An Iraqi memorandum to the league's secretariat said Baghdad's representative at Saturday's meeting will be Saad Qassim Al Hammoudi, head of the Foreign Ministry's Arab Affairs Department.

Despite a routine agenda that includes reports unrelated to the Gulf problem, Iraq's attendance adds significance to the meeting of permanent council representatives.

The crisis stirred by the Iraqi invasion dealt a severe blow to the Arab League, splitting it into two camps.

The March 20 council meeting, a twice-yearly session usually attended by foreign ministers or their deputies, will seek to patch up the divisions among the members of the league.

Baghdad last month cut ties with Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Only Iraq did not take part in a session in Cairo Sunday to prepare for the council meeting in the Egyptian capital.

"I hope those who did not come to this meeting will attend the following one," Sheikh Taher Radwan, Saudi Arabia's permanent representative to the league, said Sunday.

"Today's meeting express the will of our countries to overcome the hardships," said acting Secretary General Assaad Al Assad of Lebanon in an opening address.

"When we revive solidarity... we have the right to be optimistic about the future."

Despite the meeting's relatively insignificant agenda, Mr. Assad said Iraq's presence will mean "the meeting is important for all Arab countries."

New Kuwait cabinet may include fundamentalists

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait is expected to announce its post-Gulf war cabinet Thursday and diplomats said it could for the first time include a representative of the emirate's fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood.

Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah will head the new government despite calls by opposition leaders for him to step down.

Western and Muslim diplomats said Defence Minister Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah and Interior Minister Sheikh Salem Al Sabah were expected to be replaced — but by other members of the Sabah family which has ruled Kuwait for 250 years.

"I think the Muslim Brotherhood could be given a ministry but not one of the important portfolios," a Western diplomat said.

The Brotherhood is a conserva-

tive Islamic grouping which allied itself with the outspoken pro-democracy movement. It does not challenge the Sabahs' constitutional right to rule.

Diplomats believe the new cabinet will not include leaders of the pro-democracy movement, which is demanding a restoration of parliament and favours reducing the power of the Sabahs.

It is also demanding that the government set a firm date for parliamentary elections.

The diplomats said inviting the Muslim Brotherhood to join the cabinet might appear a section of the opposition less critical of the government than the pro-democracy movement.

As in previous Kuwaiti governments, the new cabinet is expected to include members of the emirate's Muslim Shi'ite minority, more than a third of the population.

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Russian activists push collision with Moscow

MOSCOW (AP) — Supporters of Russian leader Boris Yeltsin said Tuesday they planned to defy a ban and hold a big rally Thursday. President Mikhail Gorbachev tightened Kremlin control on city security as a show-down neared.

"This ban shows that Mr. Gorbachev is striving for a return to the old totalitarian regime," said dissident priest Gleb Yakunin, a member of Democratic Russia.

Worried that clashes could erupt at the protest, Mr. Gorbachev's cabinet on Monday banned all demonstrations in the capital for three weeks. On Tuesday, he ordered the Soviet Interior Ministry to take charge of law enforcement in Moscow, stripping policing powers from the pro-democracy city government.

It was not clear whether the new operation would work in parallel — or replace — police supervised by city officials. But both actions were intended to



Saadoun Hammadi
Hammadi
briefs
Saddam
on south

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iraq's new Prime Minister Saadoun Hammadi has briefed President Saddam Hussein on his visit to riot-hit areas in southern Iraq. Baghdad Radio said Tuesday.

The government says it has crushed a rebellion in the Shi'ite Muslim south which flared after the Gulf war ended a month ago. But Kurdish guerrillas apparently now control most of northern Iraq.

Baghdad Radio said President Saddam met Dr. Hammadi and some other members of his new cabinet Monday "and discussed the visit of the prime minister to some regions of the country."

It said Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz also briefed President Saddam on his visit few days ago to Jordan where he was received by His Majesty King Hussein.

Dr. Hammadi Saturday toured the provinces of Najaf and Qadisiyah.

Najaf, a Shi'ite Muslim holy city, was reported by refugees and exiled Shi'ite leaders to have been one of the major centres of unrest.

President Saddam reshuffled his cabinet Saturday after he promised to form a new government to rebuild Iraq from the devastation caused by the six-week Gulf war and subsequent upheavals.

Baghdad Radio quoted Housing and Construction Minister Mahmud Djivah Al Ahmad as telling local newspapers that his ministry has started repairing some of the 96 bridges destroyed across the country by allied bombing.

He said the ministry had also begun repairing the communications system in Baghdad and accused rebels of stealing many of the ministry's equipment.

Debate on democracy

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Tuesday Iraq's National Assembly will open on April 6 a debate on democratic reforms and the serious consequences of unrest since the end of the Gulf war.

The agency said the assembly, starting its regular spring session, would "focus on formulating the foundations and bases of the new democratic phase."

This will include "public liberties, press freedom and party pluralism under the supremacy of the constitution and the law," INA added.

The move will help "consolidate the Iraqis' power, unity, cohesion and capability," it said.

President Saddam promised democratic reforms in a speech earlier this month. He said these will lead to a multi-party system to replace Baath Party rule and will be put to the nation in a referendum.

INA said the assembly would also consider "ways in which Iraq can overcome the grave damage caused by acts of looting, plundering, burning and destruction carried out by deluded saboteurs and mobs will also be discussed."

INA said the debates would also centre on expanding popular participation in government and increasing popular support for the political changes in the country outlined by President Saddam.

The debates will also deal with the provisions and clauses of the new Iraqi constitution which was suspended due to the American-Zionist-Atlantic aggression," INA said.

Cabinet reviews outcome of King's talks with Assad

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Council of Ministers Tuesday reviewed the outcome of His Majesty King Hussein's visit to Damascus Monday and his talks with Syrian President Hafez Assad. The talks, held in two lengthy sessions, covered numerous Arab issues and international and bilateral affairs, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The two leaders reviewed at length the current Arab situation and emphasised their keenness to build a joint Arab stand, Petra said. It quoted the prime minister as saying that the two leaders expressed their desire to exert efforts to bolster the Arab League and its organisations so that it can heal the rift within the Arab World.

The King and the Syrian president stressed their determination to help safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. Petra quoted Mt. Badran as saying.

The two leaders affirmed that peace in the Middle East can

come only through a just and lasting settlement to the Palestine problem that can ensure the rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination on Palestinian soil and the establishment of an independent Palestine state, the prime minister said.

Tuesday's cabinet meeting also reviewed the outcome of a recent visit to Amman by Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz and the contents of a verbal message he delivered to King Hussein from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, Petra said.

The King's visit to Damascus Monday came close on the heels of Mr. Aziz's visit to Amman Saturday.

According to Petra, the Council of Ministers studied efforts being taken to help transcend inter-Arab differences and building a common ground for joint Arab action.

The Cabinet also reviewed reports from the concerned authorities about the damages to bridges, roads and public utilities in the southern governorates of Jordan as a result of the recent

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National Charter to go before general conference

By Nermene Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The final draft of the National Charter, the contract between the people and the government over sharing power and expanding democracy, will be put for a referendum at a general national conference attended by over 1,000 representatives of the different sectors of the Jordanian society.

The announcement was made by Senator Ahmad Obaidat, president of the General Commission for drafting the National Charter. It ended months of speculation and debate which accompanied

President Saddam reshuffled his cabinet Saturday after he promised to form a new government to rebuild Iraq from the devastation caused by the six-week Gulf war and subsequent upheavals.

He said the ministry had also begun repairing the communications system in Baghdad and accused rebels of stealing many of the ministry's equipment.

The figures represented actual spending and commitments signed between April 1990 and March 1991 and were based on information from sources within a government department, Peace Now spokesman Amirah Goldblum told Reuters.

Government spokesman Yossi Olmer said that even if the figures were correct they were an insignificant proportion of

Israel's \$32 billion budget for 1990.

"I can't say if this figure is true or not, although I think sounds too high. But even if it is right it is only a small percentage of the budget so what's the fuss?" he said.

Mr. Sharon said last week his ministry would build 13,000 new homes in the occupied West Bank by 1993 and would double to 20,000 the Jewish population of the "annexed" Golan Heights.

The United States, working to broker Arab-Israel peace talks, has condemned settlement as an obstacle to peace and Secretary of State James Baker this month called West Bank settlement "de facto annexation" (see page 2).

In direct opposition to its American ally and financial backer,

(Continued on page 5)

Protest over treatment of Sudanese in Kuwait

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Sudan has protested at the United Nations about the treatment of Sudanese living in Kuwait.

The Sudan News Agency, SUNA, said a memo delivered to Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar by Sudan's permanent representative called on the U.N. to intercede with the Kuwaiti government to "stop crimes and bring all those who committed them to justice."

It said a number of Sudanese had been harassed, insulted and treated in a criminal manner.

The agency gave no details of the incidents, but Khartoum newspapers report that many Sudanese guest workers have been beaten up, raped and in at least one case killed in Kuwait since the end of the Iraqi occupation.

Sudan, with a military government, was sympathetic towards Iraq during the Gulf crisis.

SUNA said the note called on the U.N. to be as committed to the protection of human rights of all people residing in Kuwait as it was to the liberation of the emirate.

Kuwait denies charge

Kuwait Tuesday rejected charges that Palestinian residents of the emirate were being jailed and killed, the Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA) reported.

KUNA, quoted Information Minister Badr Jassim Al Yaqoub as saying Kuwait applied the law equally to Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis.

"These lies and allegations put into circulation... are nothing but a continuation of the hostile policy practiced by known parties since the beginning of the criminal Iraqi invasion," Mr. Yaqoub said. He did not identify the parties.

The U.S.-based human rights group Middle East Watch said on Thursday 30 to 40 Palestinians had been killed and 2,000 jailed, many of them tortured, by Kuwaitis seeking revenge since the liberation of the emirate.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) supported Iraq during the war and some Palestinians are alleged to have collaborated with the Iraqis during the seven-month occupation of Kuwait.

Mr. Yaqoub said complaints would be referred to the courts and dealt with according to the law. Kuwait was prepared to receive international groups to monitor the situation.

Israel rejects U.S. criticism of expulsion

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Foreign Minister David Levy Tuesday rejected Washington's criticism of Israeli expulsion orders against four Palestinians, saying expulsions were necessary to the Jewish state's "security."

"The really shocking thing is they know what is happening," Mr. Levy told Israel Radio. He was referring to a spate of Arab attacks that took six Jewish lives in the past month.

He charged that the United States condemned expulsions as an obstacle to peace but never made a similar charge about the stabbings.

Mr. Levy was responding to hardline ministers Ariel Sharon and Yuval Neeman, Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan added that Arabs should be hanged, their families expelled and their homes demolished.

Mr. Sharon, leader of a powerful faction in the ruling Likud Party, Monday urged the government to expel hundreds of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israel accused them of being activists in the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) mainstream Fatah group who allegedly ordered anti-Israeli violence.

However, none was directly implicated in any of the stabbing attacks.

A hearing on the expulsion orders began Tuesday before a military appeals panel. If the panel upholds the orders, they can be appealed to Israel's supreme court. The court has never overruled an expulsion order.

State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said the orders violated the Fourth Geneva Convention on treatment of people under occupation.

"Israel's decision to deport Palestinians at this time cannot possibly contribute to the development of a peace process," Ms. Tutwiler added. U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was seeking ways to get a Middle East peace process under way following the Gulf war.

Ms. Tutwiler said a protest was lodged in Israel by U.S. Ambassador William Brown and with the Israeli embassy in Washington by Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly.

The timing of the Israeli move was especially sensitive since Mr. Baker only last week returned from a Middle East trip in which he urged Israel and Arab states to begin confidence-building steps as a prelude to peace negotiations.

Specifically, he urged Israel to ease control on Palestinians in the occupied territories. The exact list of steps he proposed has not been published but they are believed to have included releasing some prominent Palestinians in Israeli jails and allowing schools

and universities to reopen.

But the mood in Israel seems to be driving events in the opposite direction. In Sunday's cabinet meeting, Minister without Portfolio Rehavam Zeevi demanded all Palestinians of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip be permanently barred from Israel.

He also demanded the expulsion of all "murderers and inciters" with their families, the closure of Palestinian newspapers in Arab Jerusalem, and a review of the army's rules of engagement when faced with protests.

Mr. Zeevi was backed by hardline ministers Ariel Sharon and Yuval Neeman, Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan added that Arabs should be hanged, their families expelled and their homes demolished.

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Hostage release said delayed

BEIRUT (AP) — The conservative newspaper Al Diyar said Tuesday that the expected release of foreign hostages in Lebanon was delayed by conflicting conditions from the various parties involved in the complex issue. "Negotiations which had originally achieved major progress toward an early settlement for this issue, recently faced new conditions," the newspaper said.

It was Al Diyar's second report back on a story last Wednesday saying the 13 Westerners were to be released this past weekend. On Saturday it reported the negotiations had "stumbled."

The missing Westerners are six Americans, four Britons, two Germans and an Italian. Terry Anderson, 43, of Lorain, Ohio, chief Middle East correspondent for the Associated Press, is the longest-held hostage. He was kidnapped March 16, 1985.

The newspaper report did not list the parties involved in the issue of the hostages, believed held mainly by pro-Iranian factions.

Al Diyar said among conditions holding up the release were freedom of Shi'ite cleric Abdul Karim Obeid, the release of Israeli soldiers missing in Lebanon, and establishing the fate of four Iranians missing since 1982.

The Iranians, who have been repeatedly raised as an issue by the government in Tehran, are believed to be dead.

Sheikh Obeid, an activist of the Hezbollah, was kidnapped by Israeli troops from his village of Jibsheet in South Lebanon in July 1989.

Israel has in the past offered to swap Sheikh Obeid and about 300 Lebanese-held by Israeli-backed Lebanese militiamen in exchange for all Western hostages and seven missing Israeli soldiers.

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Masri in Rabat with message to King Hassan

RABAT (J.T.) — Foreign Minister Taha Al Masri arrived Tuesday in Rabat on a two-day visit during which he will meet King Hassan II of Morocco to convey to him a verbal message from His Majesty King Hussein dealing with current Arab affairs and the means of bolstering Arab solidarity under the present circumstances.

Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that Mr. Masri would hold talks with his Moroccan counterpart Abdul Latif Filali on current Arab affairs, joint Arab action, Arab and international questions of common concern to Jordan and Morocco as well as means of boosting bilateral cooperation.

Mr. Masri had already visited Tunisia, Algeria and Libya in his current tour of the Arab Maghreb

Union countries, and delivered verbal messages dealing with the Arab issues, from King Hussein to their leaders.

While in Tunis, Mr. Masri had a meeting with Palestine President Yasser Arafat for a review of the general situation in the Arab World and efforts that have to be exerted to stimulate joint Arab action within the framework of the Arab League.

Mr. Masri is expected to attend the Arab League meeting scheduled for Cairo on March 30 along with most of the Arab foreign ministers.

The Arab-Israeli question, issues of common concern to the Arab World and means of reviving joint Arab economic action are among the topics on the ministers' agenda.

Abu Qoura stresses need to provide assistance to Iraqis

AMMAN (J.T.) — President of the Standing Committee of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Ahmad Abu Qoura Tuesday received in his office delegations representing the Red Cross societies in Britain, the Netherlands, Germany and the U.S. Earthstewards Organisation and discussed with them the services they can provide to Iraq to help the Iraqi people under the current circumstances.

Abu Qoura stressed in separate meetings with these delegations the Jordanian National Red Crescent Society's interest in providing the necessary facilities for

such teams to enable them render humanitarian aid to the people of Iraq.

Following his meetings with them, Abu Qoura said that these delegations would visit Iraq Wednesday for talks with Iraqi Red Crescent officials aimed at assessing humanitarian needs there.

In his meetings with the U.S. Earthstewards Organisation and the Gulf Humanitarian Relief Team, currently on a visit to Jordan, Abu Qoura briefed them on the JNRCS's humanitarian efforts since the onset of the Gulf crisis on Aug. 2.

JVA carries out repair work to rain-damaged areas

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) has mobilised all its resources and technical teams to carry out urgent work needed to restore the damaged agricultural and water projects in southern Jordan, according to JVA Secretary General Abdul Aziz Wishah.

"Most of the irrigation installations set up at Ghor Hadidah, Mazraa, Dhira, Ghor Safi, Fifa and Khansir have sustained damage of various degrees and the JVA teams, working in cooperation with Ministry of Water and Irrigation staff and local authorities, are trying to help the local population and farmers resume their normal life," said Dr. Wishah in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

"Water pumps, bridges, canals, culverts and crops were all washed away or inundated by the heavy rain that fell for three days in the Tafleeh, Karak and Maan districts, in the south. Besides devastating crops the rain killed thousands of heads of sheep and flooded stores, homes and various other centres," said Dr. Wishah.

"The JVA has worked out an emergency plan for restoring various installations and is receiving help in this matter from the Jordanian armed forces units found in the south as well as local organisations which are providing equipment and technicians to help repair irrigation canals," Dr. Wishah added.

The recent rains, he said, replenished by eight million cubic metres of water the Jordanian

damns set up to collect water for irrigation in the dry season. According to Dr. Wishah, King Talal dam has collected more than 25 million cubic metres of water since the start of the rainy season, five in the past few days alone.

Ministry of Water and Irrigation officials said that the dams are filled with more than 39 per cent of their total capacity and that the country has passed the dangerous level of water shortage though the country still needs much more.

The officials said that the dams have a total capacity of more than 107 million cubic metres, but have only collected nearly 42 million so far.

Minister of Water and Irrigation Saad Serour visited Karak and other areas in the south Monday and inspected the affected areas. After touring areas with damaged bridges, landslides and rural areas that suffered severe damages, the minister said that the government would compensate owners of agricultural units who sustained heavy losses.

Mr. Serour, who was accompanied by Dr. Wishah and other officials, said that work was under way to repair the damages and help the farmers to resume their work.

He particularly noted that work was going on around the clock to deal with the problem of water supplies which, in several inundated areas, was mixed with impure water.

Officials visit Jordan Valley to assess extent of damage

KARAK (Petra) — Secretary General of the Ministry of Public Works and Housing Rashdan Al Rashdan Tuesday visited the southern Jordan Valley region and several areas in Karak Governorate to get acquainted with the extent of damage inflicted by floods to roads and bridges.

Mr. Rashdan, who was accompanied on the visit by Karak Public Works Department Director Jazi Al Gharabeh, said almost all roads in Karak Gov-

ernorate were open.

He called on motorists to drive carefully and affirmed that the ministry had taken all precautionary measures in areas affected by the floods, which are considered the worst in 20 years.

Mr. Rashdan's visit comes within the framework of visits by officials to areas affected by the bad weather to assess the extent of damage and define the work needed for restoration and repairs.

Jordan, Germany sign memoranda

AMMAN (J.T.) — The German government Tuesday signed three memoranda with the Jordanian government providing DM 2.3 million worth of technical assistance to the Kingdom, benefiting the Ministry of Agricultural projects, and German Ambassador here Heinrich Reinehr said that the assistance reflected Bonn's realisation of Jordan's plight as a result of the Gulf crisis.

"The German government understands the negative results of the Gulf war on the Kingdom of Jordan and is trying to help the country in different ways," said the ambassador at a ceremony for signing the memoranda at the Ministry of Planning.

The memoranda were signed for Jordan by Minister of Planning Khaled Amin Abdullah who voiced the Kingdom's deep appreciation of the German assistance under the present circumstances.

Jordan, the minister said, is committed to implementing development schemes, with help from Germany, and is striving to maximise benefits from such projects.

"In the post-war era and in the light of Jordan's difficult circumstances resulting from the Gulf crisis, Amman is seeking to

implement all agreements signed with other countries with a view to ensuring maximum benefits from them," the minister said at the ceremony.

The ambassador said that Bonn had promised DM 150 million in aid to Jordan to help it overcome part of the damages to its economy, sustained because of the Gulf war. The promise came from German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher during his recent visit to Jordan.

Towards the end of last year, the ambassador said, the German government pledged another DM 180 million in a grant to Jordan in partial compensation for its losses resulting from the war.

The ambassador expressed hope that German companies would soon come to invest in Jordanian projects in cooperation with the private sector and Jordanian firms. He noted that one of these German companies last year helped carry out the Dead Sea Hotel project.

According to the Ministry of Planning, the first memorandum signed Tuesday provides for consultancy services and equipment to the Ministry of Agriculture. Bonn and Amman agree to

cooperate for a three-year period on the project "advisory assistance" to the Ministry of Agriculture with a view to advising the ministry on the preparation of strategies and concepts for a consistent agricultural policy and assisting it in the establishment of an appropriate policy-planning department, the memorandum said.

The second memorandum provides for German assistance to the Jordan Cooperative Organisation (JCO) until Dec. 31, 1991. The assistance has been provided to JCO since 1982 for the establishment and operation of agricultural machine stations. Under the terms of the memorandum Germany will provide equipment and experts.

The third memorandum relates to assistance to the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA). Amman and Bonn will cooperate on the project of advisory assistance to the JVA with a view to developing the agricultural potential of the Jordan Valley and creating permanent living and working conditions for its population, the third memorandum noted. It said that experts and equipment would be provided for the continuation of the project.

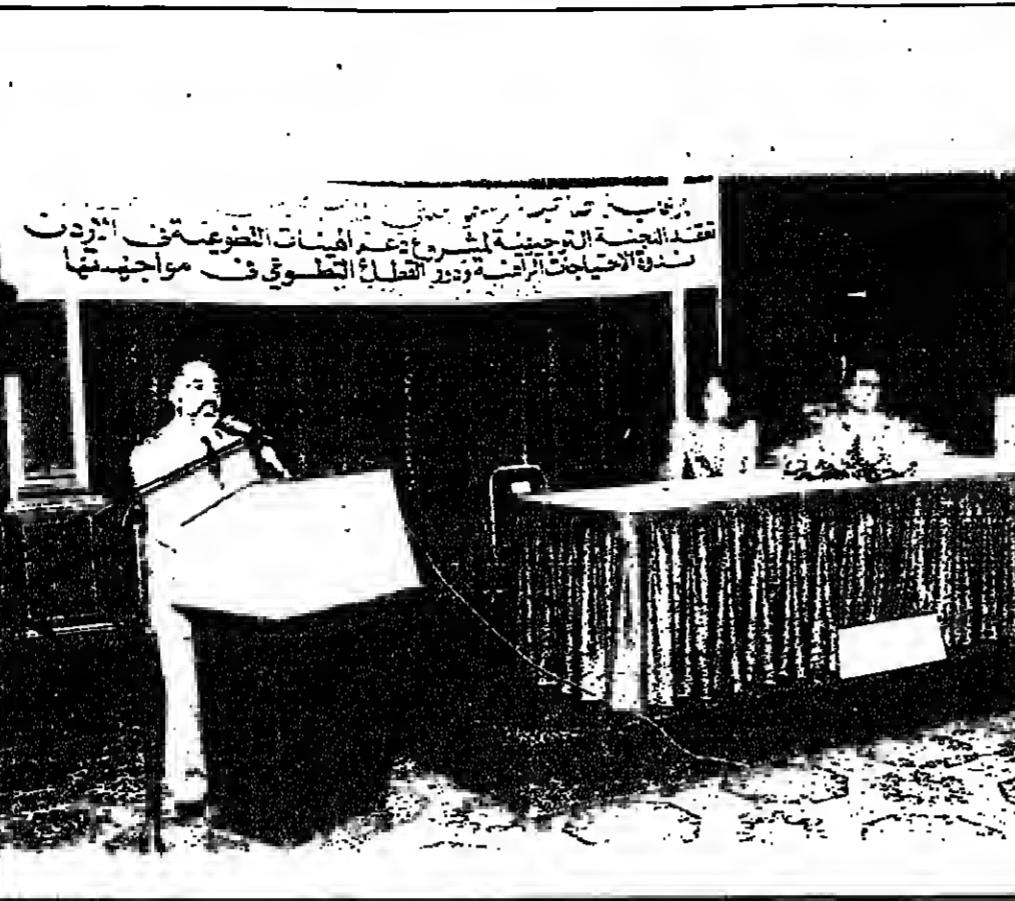
HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King condoles Al Habashneh family

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday delegated Karak Governor Eid Qatarnah to convey his condolences to Al Habashneh family over the death of Shinwan Al Habashneh.

Survey to identify disabled

NORTH SHOUNEH (Petra) — The Social Development Department here has embarked on a survey aimed at identifying the disabled in the various towns and villages of the North Shouneh district. The department Director Isam Al Araj called on all citizens in the district to cooperate with the social workers who will be carrying out the survey and to inform them on cases of disability, to study each case separately.



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Tuesday chairs a roundtable conference (Petra photo)

Even medicine for exclusive Jordanian use held up

U.S. rules makes it difficult for humanitarian aid to reach Iraq

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — U.S. customs and export control authorities are making it difficult for various humanitarian organisations to send relief supplies and medicine which could possibly find their way to Iraq to the extent that even Jordan-bound medicines are being held up, according to relief agency representatives.

A prominent human rights activist has described the U.S. policy on aid to Iraq as "harbaric."

The latest consignment to be delayed at Kennedy International Airport, New York, was 2,000 pounds (almost one tonne) of antibiotics and hospital supplies specifically requested by the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) for exclusive use in Jordan, the head of an American humanitarian organisation said Tuesday.

The authorities insisted on a special licence for the export of the consignment to Jordan, thus forcing a delegation from the organisation, Earthstewards Network based in Seattle, Washington, and head for Jordan Saturday, said Danaan Parry, director of Earthstewards who is now in Amman.

"The entire consignment, worth about \$100,000, is for exclusive use in Jordan and specifically requested by the Red Crescent," Mr. Parry told the Jordan Times.

The shipment was raised with contributions collected by two American organisations — "Peace Table" and "Gulf Humanitarian Relief" — Mr. Parry said.

Earthstewards, an international organisation which maintains worldwide chapters, is focusing its attention on extending help to Jordanians, mostly expatriates who have been forced to return to

the Kingdom in the wake of the Gulf crisis, Mr. Parry explained. Lawyers and clearing agents were trying to clear the process of shipping the consignment to Jordan, and it was believed that the authorities had given the green light by Tuesday.

An Earthstewards doctor will be accompanying the shipment, Mr. Parry said.

Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday met with the Earthstewards delegation, currently visiting Jordan, and reviewed with them the effects of the Gulf crisis on the Jordanian society, and discussed ways through which help could be extended to those affected.

The delegation is trying to obtain detailed information on Jordan's actual needs and "go back and try to work on them at home," Mr. Parry said. The delegation will be meeting with the minister of industry and trade as well as the head of the Agaba port before its departure from Jordan on April 6.

Mr. Clark visited Iraq in February and reported that the Iraqis were in dire needs of essential supplies. He said Monday he believed at least 25,000 Iraqis had been killed in the war and "thousands and thousands" more injured.

The U.N. Security Council Friday effectively lifted an embargo on food and other essential supplies to Iraq, but other restrictions remain in place.

Medicines are exempt from the trade embargo that remains in effect.

The Fellowship consignment was also held up at New York on Saturday, a few hours before it was destined to be loaded aboard a Royal Jordanian (RJ) aircraft bound for Amman.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation had planned to challenge U.S. regulations in court if the authorities had not granted a licence for export of the shipment. The Jordanian National Red Crescent was to distribute the aid to the Iraqi Red Crescent and to a children's hospital in Baghdad.

U.S. rules require donors to declare the contents of medical shipments and the recipients. Those who fail to comply face fines of up to \$1 million and prison sentences of up to three years. In the case of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Jordanian National Red Crescent was to distribute the aid to the Iraqi Red Crescent and to a children's hospital in Baghdad.

"We appeal to the United Nations and all organisations around the world to ensure the safety of the Jordanians and Palestinians who have suffered a great deal and who have lost their livelihood and their property," Father Adeli said in a statement to the Jordan Times.

"The Jordanians and the Palestinians have been subjected to torture, detention and many of them have been evicted from Kuwait; we appeal to the world community to help those evicted regain their deposits in the Kuwaiti banks," Father Adeli said.

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Conference stresses role of voluntary sector in tackling economic hardships

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAF) Tuesday said that the economic recession which hit the region since the middle of 1980s and the Gulf crisis has dealt a heavy blow to Jordan.

Addressing a round table conference on the role of the voluntary sector in meeting the current needs, Princess Basma called for increased efforts to alleviate the suffering of people and to contribute towards providing the basic needs for ensuring decent living conditions.

"Such efforts fall within the principle of social solidarity which our Islamic religion has advocated and which translates the divine wisdom," the Princess said.

Princess Basma said that Jordan had been able, through its dedication, to achieve progress and prosperity, despite its meagre resources. "The country has also made remarkable achievements in the areas of infrastructure, health care, nutrition, education, economy and social welfare," Princess Basma said.

"However, such achievements are now being threatened by great challenges, thus making it incumbent on all sectors of society to live up to their responsibilities at this critical stage," the Princess said.

She noted the important role the voluntary sector can play in this regard. "This sector has been a supportive arm and has worked

side by side with the official sector in pushing the development wheel forward," Princess Basma noted.

She voiced appreciation to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for its support of the voluntary sector in Jordan.

The Princess also voiced appreciation and gratitude to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the social survey it had undertaken in Jordan to assess the social conditions of Jordanian families following the eruption of the Gulf crisis.

Princess Basma noted that the survey had highlighted the great impact of the Gulf crisis and the economic adjustment programmes on the Jordanian families. "This impact has been demonstrated in the form of declining income, increasing unemployment resulting from the return of tens of thousands of Jordanians working in the Gulf, health and nutritional imbalances and increased risk for mothers and children," she said.

The Princess voiced hope that the conference would come up with a number of concrete recommendations capable of contributing to finding the best means of upgrading the performance of voluntary sector, to enable it to cope with the increasing demands of citizens.

Also addressing the conference was Social Development Minister Yousef Al Athem, who said that voluntary work was not a new concept, but rather "a landmark of our civilisation and

part of our culture and heritage." Mr. Athem called for intensifying the efforts to fight illiteracy, illness and poverty.

The UNDP Resident Representative Ali Attiqi also addressed the gathering saying that the UNDP project for supporting the voluntary sector was initiated in July 1990.

The project is being carried out under the supervision of a steering committee grouping representatives of the Ministries of Planning, Social Development, the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS), QAF, Vocational Training Corporation and the UNDP.

Mr. Attiqi outlined the importance of this project saying that it is of special importance because it deals directly with the most pressing problems in Jordan under the current circumstances, namely poverty and unemployment.

He pointed out that the project aims at setting up small income-generating projects capable of contributing to finding the best means of upgrading the performance of voluntary sector, to enable it to cope with the increasing demands of citizens.

The three-year project is being carried out with support from the UNDP which allocated \$250,000 for training cadres, upgrading administrative support and technical resources as well as developing the projects.

Jordan Caritas gave JD 100,000 to 1,750 needy Christian and Muslim families

Charitable organisation urges world to ensure the safety of Jordanians in Kuwait

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan Caritas Director Father Mousa Adeli Tuesday issued an appeal to the world community and the United Nations Organisation to come to the help of Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates living in Kuwait and rescue them from the systematic torture they are exposed to at the hands of armed groups in the Gulf emirate.

"We appeal to the United Nations and all organisations around the world to ensure the safety of the Jordanians and Palestinians who have suffered a great deal and who have lost their livelihood and their property," Father Adeli said.

He said that Jordan Caritas

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Marketing exports: It's more than just research

AT ALL levels and in almost every sector of the economy the main topic of discussion nowadays is marketing and specifically the need to open new outlets for Jordan's agricultural and industrial products. Even the contractors along with the service sector want jobs in the region and the Arab World and they all seek the help of the government. Experts, analysts, bankers, economists and businessmen express their views at every occasion but they seem to fall in the same trap of calling for the formation of committees or demanding the set-up of new governmental or private institutions to foster Jordanian exports.

We agree that in order to encourage Jordanian exports and exporters studies should be done, information gathered and delegations sent out to potential markets. Signing protocols and holding fairs in addition to opening a centre for our products might also be needed. But, having done that, should we just expect foreign markets to be ready to receive Jordanian products and consider the job of opening and consolidating these markets successfully accomplished?

It appears as though whatever we have been doing here in Jordan to prop up our export industry does not actually meet the level of modern trade and falls short of the requirements of smart promotion practices conducted by intelligent exporters of many nations. For one, nothing prospers or at least develops if financial spending behind it is minimal. Investment, basically investment money, needs to be spent to gain or penetrate through fierce international competition in various markets. But, instead of waging a strong marketing campaign as a sharp economic weapon of modern times, Jordanians by and large still prefer their expenses to go on studies they conduct locally and on bureaucratic measures that hamper rather than advance their cause.

There is nothing wrong in identifying a target market through a study, a survey or a research. But this is just a first step that doesn't count much in the real process. People outside Jordan, and surprisingly here too, do not value our products because Jordanian-made goods simply and invariably lack the aggressive marketing strategy to sell them.

Opening new markets and consolidating others need, other than quality control and competitive prices, the right approach to marketing. Outside markets are an outside job that goes beyond local studies and bureaucratic measures at home. It may be a costlier undertaking, but it will certainly be far more rewarding for both the exporters and the country itself.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Tuesday described King Hussein's visit to Damascus as constituting the initial step towards reconstructing joint Arab action and mobilising efforts for the coming stage in the wake of the Gulf war. The paper said that the war which was launched by the United States and its allies on Iraq was in fact directed against all Arab countries which the United States wishes to see divided. We have all suffered losses at the hands of the aggressors, and like the Iraqis, we all feel frustrated that nothing is yet done to remedy the pitiful situation in the Arab World, the paper noted. It said that Jordan has been calling for solidarity, for joint action and for an Arab order that can deal with Arab internal affairs. What the King is aiming to achieve, the paper said, is a concerted effort leading to a unified stand that can confront all challenges facing the Arab countries at large in the post Gulf war era. The paper also noted that Jordan has remained committed to its national stand and has always believed in the Arab Nation's ability to solve its own problems and end the differences among Arab countries, and this stand has brought about Washington's wrath on Jordan. It is because of this national stand that Amman has exposed to enormous pressures and because Jordan has tried to avoid the internationalisation of the Gulf crisis that it was criticised by certain countries, the paper said. The paper said that Jordan has not lost hope of bringing together the Arab states and of unifying their positions vis-a-vis the coming phase.

A columnist in Al Dustour daily wages a bitter criticism of Turkey and its President Turgut Ozal who has displayed total hostility towards the Arabs in general and Iraq in particular. Tamer Al Udean says Ozal secured his parliament's approval of launching war on Iraq during the crisis, allowed the Americans to use military bases to strike on Iraqi civilian targets in the north and expressed regret that his country failed to send forces to the Gulf to fight along with the American troops against Iraq. The writer notes that Turkey which stopped the flow of river water to Syria and Iraq is now offering to sell this water to Kuwait, and has been supplying the Kurds in northern Iraq with weapons to cause disturbances for the Baghdad government. In collusion with Tehran, Ankara has been striving to help the Kurds in the north and the Shiites in the south to rebel against Baghdad and to form a Kurdish regime in the oil rich areas of the northern districts of Iraq on condition that oil will be supplied to Turkey free, the writer points out. He says that Ozal has never concealed his ambitious desire to occupy parts of Iraq and has provided the proof through his continued support for the Kurdish rebels who, the writer says, Iraqi forces will sooner or later crush to restore stability to the country.

Political Forum

The stalled engine of economic growth

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

REAL national accounts aggregates of Jordan declined in 1989 and 1990. Because no significant shift in the underlying economic trends is envisaged soon, these aggregates will most probably decline in 1991 as well. Such a development necessarily means that either investment has been dwindling or that the incremental capital output ratio (ICOR) has climbed up. But shifts in ICOR do not normally take place over short periods of two to three years. So the drop in investment must be the force behind the sluggish performance of the economic growth of Jordan.

Investment recedes when the growth rate of savings slows down. Alternatively, savings may stay robust while domestic investment declines if part of the national savings is exported, that is lent to foreigners, i.e. to nonresidents in the jargon of an economist. In the case of Jordan, the details of national accounts for 1989-91 are not available to permit making a judgment regarding this point. However, we know that Jordanian capital fled out of Jordan in 1989 and 1990. Part of our savings was thus exported at the expense of domestic investment.

Inflation which erupted ferociously after the devaluation of the Jordan dinar slashed the purchasing power of households and firms by around 40 per cent. Once real income is squeezed that way, consumers respond by squeezing their savings more than they squeeze their consumption expenditures. That was one blow dealt to savings. The second blow took the form of the semi freeze

imposed on wages and salaries. In the absence of pay rises it is difficult to make up for the deficiency in personal savings and thus the adverse effect of inflation on the saving potential is magnified or compounded. Corporate savings could have made up for the slower pace of household savings except that the very aggressive provisional income tax law No. 40, 1989 which came into effect since Nov. 1, 1989 had eaten away an additional segment of corporate income. Thus it seemed as though the vicious circle had been closed around savings and through them around investment.

The economic adjustment programme seemed to reinforce this trend as it actually passed, not to say ignored, the whole issue of investment. The programme was mainly interested in addressing the imbalances in the economy, namely the budget and balance of payments deficits. The redressing of the budget deficit called for increasing public revenues through higher taxes which had on savings the adverse effects mentioned above. More taxes mean diverting resources from the private sector to the government. Because the marginal propensity to save of the government is less than that of the private sector, this diversion necessarily entails lower savings.

And there was more to that. Under the programme, the budget deficit was to be eliminated also through curbing public spending. Lower spending is recessionary and deflationary in nature. As spending sinks, so does income because one's income

is somebody else's spending. As they sell less and less under the impact of waning spending, businesses shave their capital spending, investment in other words.

To help enforce monetary discipline in particular and economic discipline at large, the adjustment programme recommended a squeeze on credit to the private sector (as well as to the public sector). That was another recessionary twist which did not help the cause of investment and thereby economic growth.

The above developments served jointly to stall investment. The adjustment programme did not include a mechanism to propel investment. As a matter of fact, the investment aspect was conspicuously absent from that programme and unsurprisingly led to slower or negative real growth rates. A very optimistic and highly good-intentioned researcher looking into that programme would make the assumption that the people who wrote it should have gathered that once the fiscal and balance of payment deficits are remedied, or in the course of that and probably thanks to it, the investment machine would spontaneously and automatically start working. This has not been the case so far and we do not think that the economy or the public can afford to wait any longer for it to materialise. It is said that a new adjustment programme will be worked out soon. If this is the case, we sincerely hope that investment will be given due regard.

Who won this oil war?

WAS IT really a war about oil, and if so, who won? Now that it is over, and OPEC is testing its strength, it is worth trying to remember why the war started.

Saddam Hussein certainly did not have much doubt that it was an oil war. Whatever his other ambitions, he was obsessed by the need to push up the oil price. He wanted to transmute his military power into oil power, and thus save his country from bankruptcy.

Of course, Iraq had been ruined largely by military spending. But President Saddam blamed the country's problems on the low oil price, which he insisted was being deliberately kept down by "economic warfare" by the rich monarchies led by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, inspired by the United States.

Last year he called repeatedly for the oil price to be increased to \$25 a barrel, and he knew some Americans agreed with him. When he saw the U.S. ambassador, April Glaspie just before he invaded Kuwait, he told her: "\$25 is not a high price." She replied: "We have many Americans who would like to see the price go above \$25 because they come from oil-producing states.

In fact the Saudis and Kuwaitis were keeping the price down partly to support the Western economies, partly to prevent the development of alternative fuels. In any case, Kuwait was making more money from Western investments than from oil, and reckoned it would lose out from a higher oil price. But the oil monarchies were not unhappy to see President Saddam suffer as a result of cheap oil.

So the United States appears to have won the oil war as decisively as President Saddam lost it, with a stronger hand in the Gulf than ever before.

But will that be the lasting outcome? Victories in the Middle East are never quite so simple: and military power tends to be counterproductive when it comes up against oil power.

So he invaded Kuwait. For him, the good news was that he succeeded in raising the price, even higher than \$25, by creating fears of a shortage. The bad news was that he could not benefit, as his oil was embargoed.

He achieved the opposite of what he intended — he enabled the Saudis to lift much more oil.

And as soon as Iraq and Kuwait start exporting oil again, they will

cause a glut that could push the price through the floor.

So at first sight President Saddam appears to have lost the oil war as well as the military war.

The Americans, whatever their more high-minded reasons, would never have gone to war if it had not been for oil. They avoided mentioning the word: but that was part of the oilmen's tradition.

In fact, the U.S. oil supply was less threatened than that of other nations. The Gulf was supplying only 10 per cent of America's oil, compared with 50 per cent of Japan's and world consumers could do without Iraq and Kuwait. But Japan reckoned that it could always buy its oil somewhere, because producers would have to sell it; while the Americans can buy Gulf oil as central to their national security; what was more, it could be produced at a very low price.

So the United States appears to have won the oil war as decisively as President Saddam lost it, with a stronger hand in the Gulf than ever before.

But will that be the lasting outcome? Victories in the Middle East are never quite so simple: and military power tends to be counterproductive when it comes up against oil power.

Eden launched the Suez war in the name of safeguarding Britain's oil; but he never consulted the oil companies, which would have advised against such action. Suez led to an immediate oil crisis in Britain, which benefited the Americans. And it unleashed a new wave of Arab militancy and revolts, which made possible the nationalisation of oil concessions. and led indirectly to the formation of OPEC.

The Arabs see any Western army as a throwback to earlier imperial armies. And using force to safeguard oil may prove more difficult in the nineties, in a region full of angry counter forces of extreme nationalism, fundamentalism or terrorism.

The only way to achieve safe oil supplies from the Gulf is through a peaceful settlement.

But that will be much harder with a low oil price, which will further devastate many Middle East economies — including those of the two big regional powers, Iran and Iraq.

Iraq after President Saddam will face massive costs of reconstruction, and it is unrealistic to talk about rebuilding — let alone extracting reparations — if the country is further ruined by a price collapse of its main source of revenue.

There is another catch in the victory: the catch-22 of the Gulf. The further the oil price is pushed down, the more indispensable the Gulf becomes, because other producers will demand a much higher price. And if the oil price collapses, OPEC will again be scared into unity, and will find its power once more.

The West is desperately looking for alternative sources of energy to end its dependence on the Gulf. The most obvious answer is the Soviet Union, still the world's biggest producer, with huge oil and gas reserves that could help supply Eastern and Western Europe.

But early this month in Budapest, I heard international oil and gas experts comparing horror stories about Soviet mismanagement: installations have been hopelessly neglected, and production is falling.

The Soviet empire has been held together by oil, and by military power. If it disintegrates, its oil-producing regions will want to exert their own power, and the energy crisis will worsen.

In this last cold winter the Eastern Europeans have bitterly realised their dependence on Soviet energy, which now costs them far more for fuel supplies.

They now see a different equation between military power and production.

The Soviet empire has been held together by oil, and by military power. If it disintegrates, its oil-producing regions will want to exert their own power, and the energy crisis will worsen.

Even the Americans are not united (as Ambassador Glaspie explained to President Saddam).

In Washington, Richard McCormack, at the state Department, still insists that the free market cannot be defied, and that alternative fuels make a stable price impossible to any case. But Texas still has some clout, and free market rhetoric does not always correspond to actions.

Five years ago, when the oil

oil power: they have more to fear from the absence of oil than the presence of armies.

Soviet oil and gas can be revived only with massive capital and technology from the West or Japan. But Western businessmen now do not know whether to negotiate with Moscow or with the republics. They cannot risk investing without guarantees from their governments, which are very reluctant to give them.

Most of all, they need some assurance of a stable oil price to produce reasonable returns. To try to develop Siberia in the midst of a glut of cheap oil is simply unrealistic.

So the West is still driven back to the Gulf for its oil. In the meantime, some politicians are having second thoughts about the advantages of an uncontrolled free market for world oil. In Paris the International Energy Agency, the club of oil consumers — and once OPEC's arch-enemy — has begun talking about joint meetings with OPEC to stimulate investment in producing countries, which can only mean stabilising the price. The French, with their eye on big contracts in Iraq and elsewhere, are now strongly advocating a stabilised oil price.

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Five years ago, when the oil

price collapsed below \$10, Reagan's White House kept reappearing: "Let the free market work."

But the low price was crippling Texas, and the then Vice-President, George Bush (who, after all, is half-Texan) went to Saudi Arabia to urge King Fahd to cut back production, in order to push the price up — which he did, to \$18 a barrel.

Today Texas again has the same fears. And the U.S. is becoming more deeply involved in the Gulf. America will feel compelled to help rebuild shattered Iraq; but that cannot be paid for unless the oil price can be maintained at a viable level.

In the next two years the price will be back on the switchback. When Kuwait and Iraq begin pumping again the glut will still further. But then OPEC will begin to get its act together again. The Saudis will be compelled to cut back to avoid economic chaos in the region: for they cannot risk a replay of the last seven months. The Saudi Oil Minister warned The Independent March 14 that the price would probably go above \$21 in the future.

This time the price rise will probably find some discreet support from the West. George Bush and King Fahd will begin to see a common interest in rescuing both the Gulf and Texas from disaster.

OPEC will begin to look more like "Opec" — an organisation of consuming, as well as petroleum exporting, countries. And the price will go up to a level where it can be stabilised — perhaps up to \$25.

So who will have won the oil war? — The Independent.

Strong consensus that Arab regimes are outdated

Udo Steinbach, 47, is the director of Hamburg's prestigious Deutsche Orient Institut, an establishment dedicated to research on contemporary Middle Eastern issues, including central Asia. The author of many books and articles in scholarly journals, Steinbach is also the editor of a volume on contemporary Islam, *Der Islam in der Gegenwart, two volumes on the Middle East* that serve as a handbook for the region. He has also authored a series of publications on Turkey. On a visit to Athens, Professor Steinbach was interviewed by Middle East Times editor in chief Ramez Malouf.

THERE are many experts who argue that a discussion of the democratisation of the Middle East is premature. Do you share this view?

Not at all. I think in terms of building the new world order the democratisation of the Middle East is absolutely essential.

Before the Gulf crisis, there were quite impressive beginnings of democratisation. So the old structures were about to break apart. This was true in Algeria, for example, where the FLN regime broke apart and now we have a lot of political parties. We the

had the elections at the beginning of the summer. And in the year before there was pressure on Jordan to elect a parliament. There was also Kuwait where precisely a year ago people took to the streets demanding more democracy and the reestablishment of

participation, in one hand, and Islamic colouring of the whole thing, on the other hand.

The question is not whether to introduce democracy, but how to mix democracy with Islam, or whether Islam is compatible with participation. The fundamentalists themselves say they are democratic, but this is really not true. Of course people in Islam are equal, but this alone is not democracy.

The notion of the sovereignty of the people is nothing which is implied in Islam.

So I think that there is a movement now among many intellectuals asking "How can we walk in the directions of participation? And how can we in the same time make Islam compatible with democracy or what sort of democracy is compatible with Islam or how can we modernise Islam?"

Not necessarily. I think people will continue to ask for participation. What happened in eastern Europe in the last two years is very significant and I think there are many people who like that and want this to be followed in their own country. I have talked to many people who see it that way. I don't think there is an alternative to democracy, or participation, whatever you call it.

There are many intellectuals who are concerned about establishing democracy but doubt whether the Western type of democracy is applicable to their region. But definitely and certainly there are calling for participation.

What should happen, for example to the

Cabinet

(Continued from page 1)

rain storm. The council was briefed on the immediate measures taken to reopen the roads and repair damages to various facilities. Various ministries were requested to mobilise all teams to carry out repair work. Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Rawouf Al Rawabdeh will prepare report on the issue.

Petra statement said that the minister will carry out a field trip to the affected areas in the south on Wednesday.

Charter

(Continued from page 1)

minister, also announced at a lecture he delivered at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation that the eight months of discussion among the different subcommittees of the commission as well as the general committee indicated the need to change some of the articles of the Jordanian Constitution and introduce new laws.

"Changes have to be made in the Constitution wherever necessary," Mr. Obeidat said pointing out that these steps "are natural if this charter is to set the light and fit in with the dimensions of freedom in public life."

Jordan took the first step towards democracy two years ago with general elections for the Lower House of Parliament in the first such step in more than 20 years.

Political parties are yet to be officially recognised in the country although most of them have opened party offices and are operating in publicly.

The National Charter is expected to provide the prerequisites for political pluralism with the hope that the next general elections will be held on party platforms rather than individual states.

It also deals with the roles of the different institutions in the country and their accountability to the people through the law.

"Since we recognise that a state of law is a democratic state, which commits itself to the supremacy of the law and derives its legitimacy from the will of the free people... the National Charter has prescribed that the Jordanian state that we strive for is a state of law," Mr. Obeidat said.

The division of power among the public institutions and the three authorities of the country, legislative, judicial and executive, as stipulated by the charter would guarantee citizens their legal and civil rights.

However, these liberties remain conditioned to what is deemed as the boundaries of national security. "The state is called upon to guarantee the rights of acquiring information without harming national security and national interests," Mr. Obeidat pointed out in his lecture while referring to articles within the charter governing freedom of press and free access to information.

The charter also stresses the influence of Islam on legislation in the Kingdom, but maintains freedom for all political ideologies and calls for the respect of opposing views.

"The charter, through several of its foundations, stressed on a series of Arab, Islamic, human and national ethics and reiterated the freedom of expression and the right of others to differ and the necessity of respecting the opinion of others," Mr. Obeidat explained.

No date for the general conference has been set yet except for separate statements by officials placing it sometime "soon." It is expected that the participants in the conference are going to include members of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, political activists, union leaders, heads of government institutions as well as representatives of governors and municipalities.

Resolution

(Continued from page 1)

means to guarantee it," said a Western diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The five also were still discussing earmarking a percentage of Iraq's oil revenues to be placed in a United Nations fund to pay compensation to Kuwait and other nations, diplomats said.

The resolution does not call for a permanent ceasefire, but sets forth conditions which Iraq must meet before a permanent end to hostilities can be achieved and before all foreign forces are withdrawn from Iraq.

It elaborates upon earlier U.N. resolutions and demands. It demands that Iraq fulfil all U.N. resolutions, including the provisions requiring Iraq return all

Kuwaiti captives and remains of all prisoners of war, return all gold, currency, museum art, Kuwaiti aircraft and other "stolen" property.

Non-aligned nations are working on a draft resolution which would call for lifting all economic sanctions against Iraq. The council has called an embargo on food and promised to allow the import of fuel, electrical generating equipment, water purification equipment and other health essentials.

Iraq has submitted a detailed list of Kuwaiti property it took from the emirate, including \$457 million worth of gold, \$600 million in currency and 11 boxes of Kuwaiti banknote plates.

In a letter addressed to Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuello and the Security Council, Iraq said the government was ready to return these items immediately "in such manner as may be determined by the Security Council."

Settlements

(Continued from page 1)

er, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's right-wing coalition government is pledged to "strengthen, broaden and deepen settlement."

A visitor to the West Bank can see signs of growth at dozens of cities. Bulldozers are building new access roads and levelling building plots while cranes supply mobile homes, many of them for Soviet immigrants.

Opposition groups battling the settlement drive have been making public internal housing ministry plans to double the Jewish population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, where some 100,000 settlers now live in fortified enclaves among almost two million Palestinians.

A March 20 U.S. State Department report identified \$82.5 million in settlement expenditure in the 1990/91 budget but said official Israeli figures were incomplete and it could make only a partial estimate.

"We believe there is additional funding which may be attributed to settlements... that cannot be identified from available Israeli budget documentation," the report said.

The Mujahedeen reported a major victory Monday over Tehran government troops.

The Mujahedeen said NLA troops counter-attacked along a 150-km front after government raids on its positions north of the Iraqi towns of Jaluha and Khanqaqin.

The report was commissioned by U.S. congressman David Obey during debate on Israel's request for \$400 million in housing guarantees for Soviet Jewish immigrants to Israel.

Israel got the guarantees after promising not to use them for housing in areas occupied by Israel in the 1967 war, where the State Department report estimates almost 9,000 Soviet Jews settled in 1990.

A diplomatic source said the latest declarations by Mr. Sharon and the opposition disclosures "would not be helpful" if Israel was considering further guarantee applications.

Rebellion

(Continued from page 1)

spokesman as saying on Monday that Baghdad was trying to distract public opinion from the difficulties it faced in the rebellion.

"As declared earlier, Iran in no way interferes in Iraq's internal affairs and the allegations regarding ceasefire violation and border crossing by Iranian soldiers are mere lies," the spokesman said.

The United States said it will not become directly involved in the unrest in Iraq and will only down combat helicopters being used against rebel forces if they pose a threat to allied forces.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said Tuesday.

man, Morteza Sarmadi, told IRNA.

"Iran fully observes the ceasefire regulations and is vigilantly watching the developments in border regions in view of the particular conditions inside Iraq and possible abuse of the situation by suspicious elements," Mr. Sarmadi added.

Iraqi Ambassador Abdul Aziz Al Anbari, in a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuello Monday, listed 13 border incidents he said took place between March 6 and 17 and involved Iranian soldiers or other "groups" or "individuals" coming from Iran.

An Iranian opposition group meanwhile denied an Iraqi Kurdish leader's statement that its forces were preparing an attack to regain the oil town of Kirkuk.

The Mujahedeen-e-Khalq said its National Liberation Army (NLA) had not interfered in the rebellion in Iraq.

Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, said in Damascus Monday: "More than 5,000 armed mercenaries of the (Iranian) Mujahedeen are now being prepared and supplied with tanks to lead a ground attack by Iraqi forces on Kirkuk."

Mr. Talabani returned to northern Iraq Tuesday, cheered by supporters, a British Broadcasting Corporation correspondent reported from the Iraqi town of Zakhro near the Turkish border.

The Mujahedeen statement denounced Mr. Talabani as "a disreputable mercenary of the Khomeini regime," referring to Iran's late leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

It said NLA forces had fought off attacks on its bases in eastern Iraq near the Iranian border by Iranian Revolutionary Guards over the past 16 days.

"The NLA's counter-offensive on March 24 was carried out to get rid of (the Revolutionary Guards) in the Khanqaq region and NLA forces did not head for Kirkuk..."

"Talabani's remarks... are totally false and unfounded," the statement said.

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In a classroom down the hall a group of 6-year-olds is chanting

School gives orphans an identity

By Clare Pedrick

TUNIS — In a schoolroom in a quiet suburb of the Tunisian capital, art teacher Maha Aghwany is looking through the latest batch of drawings done by a group of 9- and 10-year-olds. One shows firemen trying to extinguish the flames of a burning building as a military helicopter hovers overhead. Another shows a Palestinian resistance fighter, his legs blown off, hobbling on crutches toward a faraway land, where the sun always shines. A third depicts Palestinian children throwing stones during the intifada, the popular uprising that began in the occupied territories three years ago. On the left side of the picture, Israeli soldiers armed with tanks and machine guns are firing at the protesters.

The drawings are the work of pupils at a school for Palestinian children funded by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and by donations from Arab countries. In the Palestinian community the school is called the "School for the Children of Martyrs." Many of the young are orphans. Large numbers have seen war firsthand. Almost all of them have experienced the tragedy of the Palestinian diaspora in one way or another. Often their families have been split up; they may have parents, brothers and sisters dispersed in all corners of the globe.

The children's drawings, say their teachers, show their inner turmoil. While other youngsters their age paint houses, animals and flowers, these pupils draw nightmare pictures of the horrors that they have seen. "Their drawings depict war, massacres, maybe their father or mother who were killed," said deputy headmaster Suleiman Abu Nader.

"They have seen their parents killed in front of their eyes in Beirut. Others were so small that they don't know what happened to their mothers and fathers. After what happened in Lebanon and we came to Tunis, we opened this school so as to have all the Palestinian children here together in one place," he explained.

PLO Chairman Arafat, whose headquarters is in Tunis, is a frequent visitor to the school. "He loves children, and he takes a special interest in this school," said a PLO official. Most of the children lost their parents in Beirut, during the Israeli bombings in 1982 or in the massacres in the refugee camps of Sabra and Chatila in the same year. "A lot of them have had very difficult experiences," said Abu Nader. "They have seen their parents killed in front of their eyes in Beirut. Others were so small that they don't know what happened to their mothers and fathers. After what happened in Lebanon and we came to Tunis, we opened this school so as to have all the Palestinian children here together in one place," he explained.

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Many children still don't know whether their parents are dead or alive. "They probably never will find out," said Abu Nader. "When they grow up, we want them to know everything about the Palestinian problem and their country."

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In a classroom down the hall a group of 6-year-olds is chanting

what sounds almost like a prayer. "Palestine, my home," they choruse, "it has been taken by strangers. But it will remain in our hearts forever."

Teachers at the school deny that they are indoctrinating the children or encouraging them to hate. "Of course we don't teach them to hate the Jews," said Abu Nader. "We are looking for peace, and we teach our students to look for peace, too. We know the Jews are people like us and we want to live in Palestine with the Jews in peace."

What is vital is that all the children should be together. Offers have come from families all around the world who would like to adopt the orphaned children, but the PLO has declined them. "The PLO believes it is better for them to live here," said Abu Nader. "It wants them to live as Palestinians. If we accepted the offers of adoption, then they would lose their national identity and would become Americans, Swedes or Britons."

The PLO acts as mother and father to the children whose parents are dead, paying for and making decisions on their welfare, their education and their vacation time. Most of the children go abroad at least once a year to visit relatives, or they have spent their vacations in camps in Scandinavia, Western Europe and Eastern Europe. Once they graduate, at age 18, arrangements are made for them to continue their studies at colleges and universities in Europe and the United States.

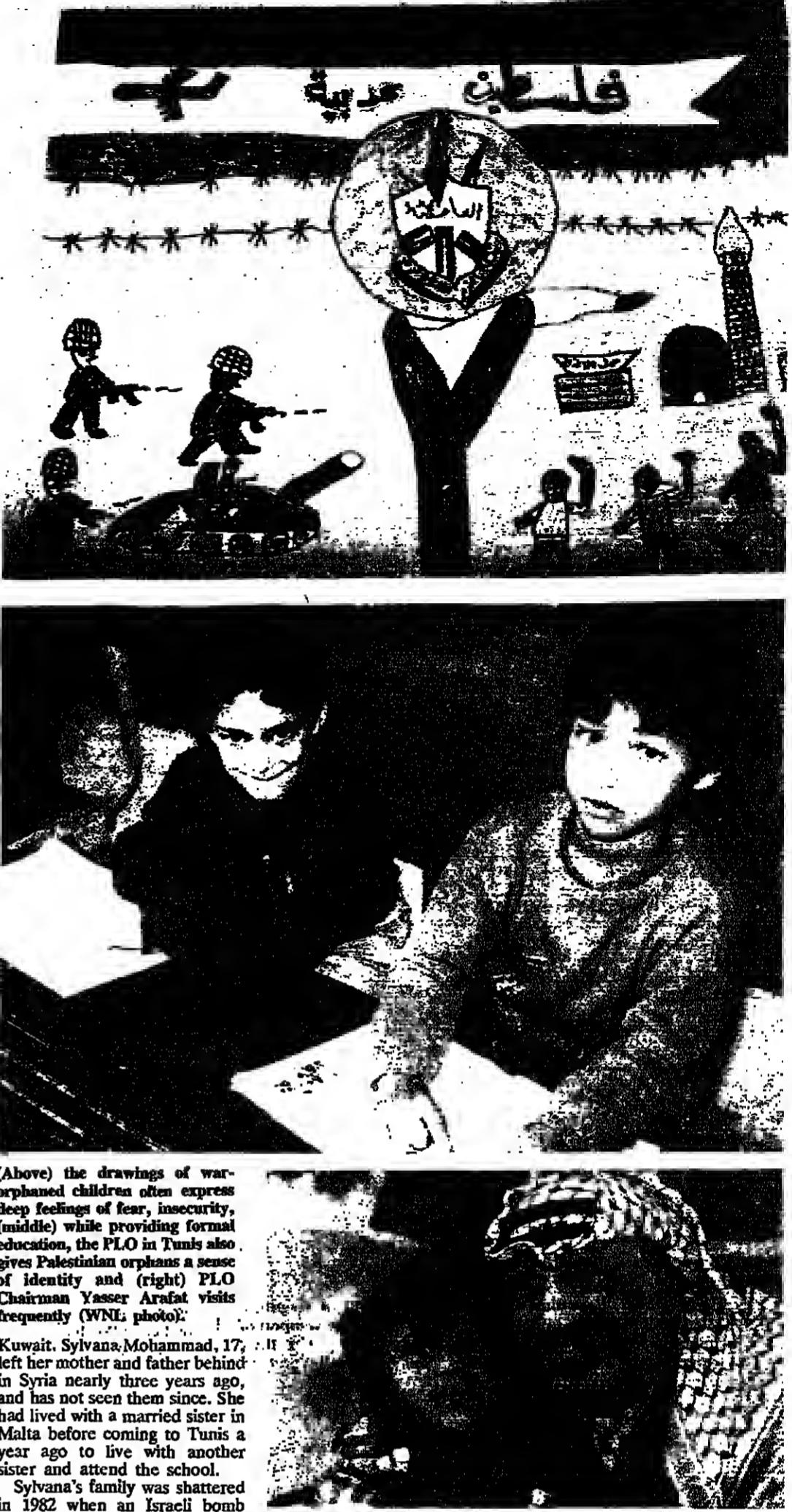
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(Above) the drawings of war-orphaned children often express deep feelings of fear, insecurity, (middle) while providing formal education, the PLO in Tunis also gives Palestinian orphans a sense of identity and (right) PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat visits frequently (WNI photo).

Kuwait, Sylvana Mohammad, 17; left her mother and father behind in Syria nearly three years ago, and has not seen them since. She had lived with a married sister in Malta before coming to Tunis a year ago to live with another sister and attend the school.

Sylvana's family was shattered in 1982 when an Israeli bomb destroyed their Beirut home, killing her brother and her grandparents. "We lost everything. I remember it vividly. When we left for Syria we had nothing but the clothes we were wearing," she said. "I can remember the day the Israelis came and I saw people being killed everywhere. I will never forget it. In the future, I will tell my children what happened in Beirut and about my country, Palestine. Even if I can't see it in the future when we have liberty and peace."

There are no psychiatrists at the school. The 35 teachers, all of them Palestinian, believe that the best therapy is in bringing the children together so that they can share their common experiences. They also try to help the youngs-

ters put the past behind them by encouraging them to lead as normal a life as possible. "We try to give them a school life which is the same as any other child's," said Abu Nader. "We don't treat them as special cases. We try to teach them to play as though nothing had happened to them. On Sundays we take them on outings to the beach or to visit other cities in Tunisia."

To an outsider the atmosphere seems a happy one. Teachers and students appear to get on well, and the children show a strong will to learn. Almost all of them want to further their education, hoping for careers in such fields as medicine, computer technology or engineering.

But in spite of the concerted

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Jordan Times

(Continued from page 1)

means to guarantee it," said a Western diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The five also were still discussing earmarking a percentage of Iraq's oil

Time for England to beat the Irish — Taylor

By Reuters

ENGLAND manager Graham Taylor believes Ireland's recent sequence of good results against them is about to end in their crucial European Championship qualifying match at Wembley Wednesday.

Taylor is confident home advantage will give England their first win in four meetings against Ireland in a match which could decide who qualifies from group seven for next year's finals in Sweden.

Since Ireland beat England in the last European Championship finals they have drawn with them twice — in the World Cup finals in Italy and in last November's Group 7 game in Dublin.

"This is the game when it will get sorted out," said Taylor. "I think we will win."

He acknowledged that Ireland manager Jack Charlton — a member of England's 1966 World Cup winning side — had as much belief in his side since reaching the last eight in Italy and building a 23-game unbeaten home record.

But England have not conceded a goal in their last nine home World Cup and European Championship qualifying games and beat the Irish on their last two visits to Wembley in the 1980s.

Taylor will be looking to striker Gary Lineker and midfielder David Platt, who have scored 10 of England's last 11 goals, to continue their remarkable scoring run and provide the knockout punch.

Platt, whose goal in Dublin earned England a vital point, scored a hat-trick for Aston Villa two weeks ago in his second game back after a seven-week absence through injury.

He scored again last weekend against Sunderland, Tony Caserino, his Villa team mate who scored for Ireland in Dublin, showed he was in form with two in the Sunderland match.

Charlton, who is not naming

his side until he has seen England's line-up, does not accept the mateb will decide the group.

"The game is too early in the competition to say that whoever wins will qualify. Poland are still in there with a shout," he said.

"It's one we would both very much like to win but it's not disaster if we don't."

Ireland lead the group on goal difference from England, with both sides having three points from two games while Poland have two from two.

Both sides go into the game without key players. England will miss tough Liverpool midfielder Steve McMahon while Ireland are without his club-mate Ronnie Whelan and defender Mick McCarthy.

England captain Bryan Robson, who missed the 1-1 draw in Dublin, returns and Taylor has drafted 19-year-old Lee Sharpe, Robson's Manchester United team mate, into the squad.

The left winger, who scored a hat-trick in a 6-2 win against Arsenal in November and was voted young player of the year by his fellow professionals Sunday, gets his chance on the substitutes' bench following the withdrawal of Marseille's Chris Waddle through injury.

Arsenal central Defender Tony Adams, who played a vital role in subduing Ireland's big strikers Niall Quinn and John Aldridge in November, looks set for the same role just 40 days after his release from prison for driving offences.

Everton winger Kevin Sheedy, whose equaliser against England in Italy helped Ireland on their way to the World Cup quarter-finals, could return after having his first game since February Saturday.

Belgium must beat Wales

Belgium need to beat Group 5 leaders Wales in a European Championship qualifier Wednesday to maintain their hopes of reaching next year's finals.

But the Belgians, finalists in the past three World Cups, will be without their most experienced player, team captain Jan Ceulemans, who is dogged by back pains.

"I knew from last week he was in pain but I delayed my decision (to omit him) until after the weekend," said Belgian national coach Guy Thys. "It's a shame. He would have played."

"I only want players who are 100 per cent fit against Wales," Thys added.

And for good reason.

Wales beat Belgium 3-1 at home last October and later won 1-0 in Luxembourg, which put

mans.

Thys earlier had to replace his injured libero Marc Ennens with veteran defender Leg Clijsters.

Wales on the other hand will miss their trusted defender Clayton Blackmore through suspension. He is likely to be replaced by David Phillips.

Scotland players exhausted

Scotland manager Andy Roxburgh is worried that some of his players may be exhausted from a punishing schedule and will not be fully fit for Wednesday's European Soccer Championship qualifier against Bulgaria.

"I only want players who are 100 per cent fit against Wales," Thys added.

And for good reason.

Wales beat Belgium 3-1 at home last October and later won 1-0 in Luxembourg, which put

land, will make themselves firm favourites to qualify for the finals in Sweden next year if they can achieve a convincing win against Bulgaria.

Scottish captain Alex McLeish said: "We don't worry about Bulgaria because we believe we are more than a match for them at Hampden Park. We don't fear anyone there."

Bulgaria will be without two leading players.

Defender Nikolai Todorov, who scored Bulgaria's equaliser against Scotland in their first match, has a broken hand and Barcelona striker Kristo Stoichkov, the second highest scorer in the Spanish League, is suspended.

Coach Ivan Vutsov, serving a three-year toughline ban imposed by UEFA in January for splitting at a referee and arguing with a linesman, said his side was stronger for having 12 of the squad playing for foreign clubs.

"It is good for us, because the conditions for training abroad are much better than ours in Bulgaria."

"This is not an occasion to make early (team) judgements. We need people who are mentally and physically sharp and rating to go," he said.

One of his more difficult decisions is which of his strikers will start the game.

John Robertson, averaging a goal a game from his first two internationals, is back in the squad after missing the last two matches through injury, but may lose out to Maurice Johnston who returns after quitting international soccer last year.

Johnston looks favourite to link up with his Rangers' team mate Ally McCoist, who scored in the 1-1 draw in Sofia in November, possibly at the cost of Manchester United's Brian McClair.

Scotland, who lead Group 2 with five points from three games, a point ahead of Switzerland,

except San Marino have played three matches. Scotland lead on five points, one more than the Swiss who beat San Marino 4-0 away in the republic's championship debut in November.

Bulgaria have three points, Romania two and San Marino zero, with a goals record of none for and 10 against.

San Marino's only realistic aim is not to win or even draw, but to score. "Our dream is to succeed in getting a goal," coach Giorgio Leonardi said.

The task will be harder without their only professional, Massimo Bonini, a midfielder with Italian first division Bologna. He is ruled out by a leg injury.

They will also be missing Mariano Macina, a skilful former professional with several Italian clubs including AC Milan, who has been plagued by injury.

Paolo Mazzola, a new addition to the squad, is likely to start in the striker's role in place of Macina, who played for the first 45 minutes in Bucharest.

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Yugoslavs rely on Red Star players

Yugoslav national team coach Ivo Osim relies mainly on informed Red Star Belgrade players for the European Championship qualifier against Northern Ireland Wednesday.

Yugoslavia, who have won all three matches in Group 4 so far, will field six players from the Belgrade team which reached the European Cup semifinals last week.

They will be complemented by Osim's usual blend of exiles and the team is in optimistic mood.

"We beat them away, so we should beat them at home," said Osim, referring to his team's 2-0 win in Belfast last September.

But he quickly reverted to his usual cautious self.

"I have my worries, however. I wonder if Red Star's players can concentrate fully on anything except the European Cup right now."

All the teams in group two

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY MARCH 27, 1991

Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

getting good advice.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Your own ideas are just not practical for the situation that concern you but a good friend has the right answer and should be consulted.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You now find that a secret worry can keep you from going out in the world and making big headway with those who are prominent.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 19) This is the time to get off to some new scenes and meet some new personalities instead of being with the same faces that you see all the time.

AQUARIUS: (January 20 to February 18) Take some time out now to get those promises you have made that require a considerable amount of detail behind you and forget that bigwig.

PISCES: (February 19 to March 20) Partners are able to back up what you want so look to them and stop thinking you have to go all around to everyone to get some good advice.

TODAY'S CHILD: If your child were born today she or he charms others with their unusual warmth and magnetism which is a natural part of this progeny's character and nature. Travelling in foreign lands — far from their places of birth is unusually good for public work in which persons of important positions are involved.

THE BETTER HALF

By Harris



"I don't really care about my weight. I just diet so I have a good excuse for being grouchy."

JUMBLE

THAT SCRABBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

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SUDJAT

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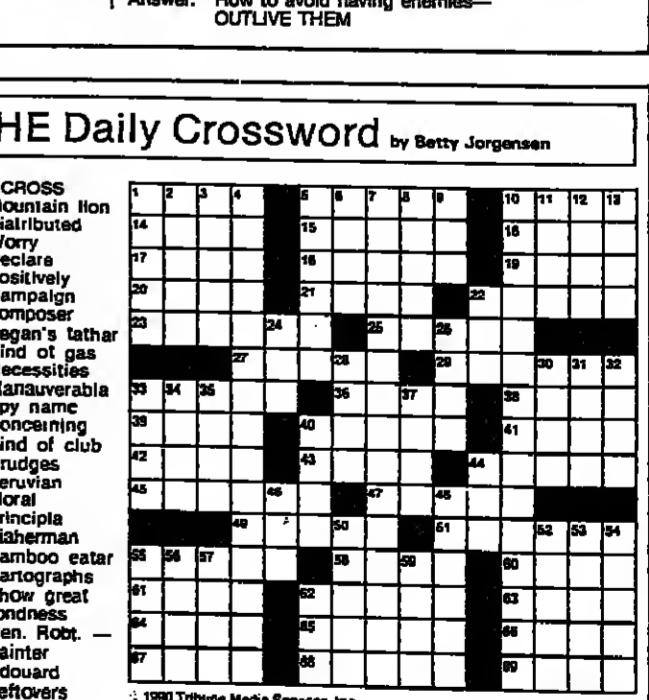
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

THE Daily Crossword

by Betty Jorgenson



Turkey asks U.S. to press for Kuwaiti, Saudi Gulf aid

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkey has asked the United States to press Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to make an urgent aid payment of \$1 billion to help recoup Gulf crisis losses, a government official said Monday.

The official, who asked not to be named, said Turkish officials made the request at the weekend when President Turgut Ozal was visiting President George Bush at Camp David.

Turkey has been promised \$4 billion in Gulf aid and has so far received \$1.3 billion, the official said.

"Turkey has asked for the quick payment of at least \$1 billion of the remaining aid pledge," he said.

Kuwait gave Turkey \$300 million in September and said this month it would pay out another \$900 million in nine months instalments. Saudi Arabia promised \$1.1 billion worth of free crude oil, which it began delivering in November.

Turkey says it lost \$5 billion last year by enforcing U.N. sanctions against Iraq and stands to lose a further \$2 billion this year.

Coffee prices may go up soon

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Coffee drinkers face higher prices if Brazil, the world's biggest producer, proves serious about a new international pact to limit exports, traders said Monday.

Brazil sent world coffee markets spinning last week by suddenly halting all new coffee exports and saying it was considering a return to a pact. On Friday coffee for May delivery jumped in price by five per cent in less than an hour in New York, although it later fell back as traders took profits.

Dealers say that if a five per cent rise in bean prices were to stick, world coffee giants like Nestle or General Foods would

Ankara cut Iraqi oil export pipelines across its territory, halted trade with Iraq and incurred higher military spending. Tourism, investment, exports and remittances were also hit.

Bankers said a swift injection of foreign aid would ease pressure on the lira and meet the government's need for cash, which has jacked up interest rates and mopped up liquidity at a time when banks are finding it harder to borrow abroad.

They said Ozal would try to improve Turkey's access to foreign credit when he meets bankers and International Monetary Fund and World Bank officials in the United States this week.

Accompanying Ozal are State Minister Gunes Taner, central bank governor Rusdu Saracoglu and other senior officials.

"Everybody is waiting for the Turkish team to return from the United States. There is a lot of uncertainty on the markets," said Yavuz Canevi, general manager of Istanbul's Euro-Turk Bank.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development said last week that Turkey might suffer from a weakening

have to consider increasing retail prices.

"If Arabica coffee stays above a dollar a pound then the big roasters will definitely have to look at higher retail prices," one trader said.

Economy Minister Zelia Cardoso de Mello said she decided to rethink Brazil's coffee policy because the July 1989 collapse of the previous pact led to a price slump that hurt Brazil's coffee growers.

"The four million coffee growers in Brazil did not benefit from this," she told reporters in Sao Paulo Sunday. "So it is clearly important to put the eventual return of Brazil to participation in

payments balance this year, when it must find \$6 billion to service its \$42.8 billion foreign debt.

The current account swung to a deficit of \$2.32 billion in January-November 1990 compared to a \$784 million surplus a year ago, reflecting the slump in hard currency inflows from tourism, trade and foreign investment.

Bankers and economic officials said the jump in overnight lira interest rates to 180 per cent last week, compared to 70 per cent in February, pointed to a severe liquidity shortage.

The treasury is relying heavily on central bank funds for monthly repayments of more than 2.5 trillion lira (\$695 million) in government bonds and bills at annual interest rates of 70 per cent compared to 60 per cent in January.

The budget deficit has soared to 1.74 trillion lira (\$463 million) in the first two months of the year compared to a 154 billion lira (\$43 million) surplus a year ago.

"We've been going through a very difficult period," Private Interbank General Manager Metin Aratz told Reuters.

Firms press to sell Kuwait U.S. steel

WASHINGTON (R) — A coalition representing 51 American steel firms urged Monday that government agencies and Congress press Kuwait to require that U.S. firms awarded reconstruction contracts use U.S. products, including steel, in the contracts.

The Steel Manufacturers Association said U.S. firms had the capacity to respond immediately to Kuwaiti orders for U.S.-made products. Association spokesman James Collins said Kuwait had pledged that 60 per cent of reconstruction would go to U.S. firms and the association did not want the firms to go overseas to buy their steel and other products. It asked the agencies as well as Congress to urge Kuwait to specify that U.S. firms adhere to a buy-American policy.

Egyptian state-run business faces major shake-up in July

CAIRO (R) — Egypt will soon begin a major shakeup of its monolithic state-run enterprises, a move economists say could mean painful price increases and cost thousands of jobs but pave the way for rapid economic growth.

Industry Minister Mohammad Abdul Wahab said the government hoped to implement a new law by July to let state-run firms, now tightly regimented, set their own prices and organise their labour force.

Western economists said the government was unlikely to allow hasty firing of workers but that if the new system was taken to its logical conclusion unprofitable companies would eventually close.

"It will be... an economic transformation," Abdul Wahab said. "It is not only a matter of change of law, but also a change of concept."

Another official told Reuters the planned reforms could eventually force the heavily overstaffed and inefficient state com-

panies to shed a large number of workers.

The official said the government hoped a \$400 million "social fund" being set up by the World Bank would help the economy absorb them.

Western economists said the government was unlikely to allow hasty firing of workers but that if the new system was taken to its logical conclusion unprofitable companies would eventually close.

Economists said monetary and currency reforms taken earlier this year on the advice of the International Monetary Fund had already begun to hit many of the firms.

Under the old system state-run companies, officially called public authorities, were given first shot

at cheap, scarce loans and foreign exchange. Now they must compete with the private sector at high free market rates.

In January the government allowed banks to set their own interest rates and in February made the pound convertible.

Public authorities would be grouped over an 18-month period into holding companies able to invest and raise finance on their own, reorganise firms under their control and sell shares on capital markets.

Managers need cabinet-level approval to increase the price of some of their products and have found it difficult to pass costs on to consumers.

Their companies will soon face a host of other problems.

Officials say new legislation in the pipeline will allow private companies to invest in areas once set aside for public authorities and give them more freedom to

import from abroad.

Abdul Wahab said the government hoped to submit the new public sector law to parliament by May.

Public authorities would be grouped over an 18-month period into holding companies able to invest and raise finance on their own, reorganise firms under their control and sell shares on capital markets.

Economists estimate that the labour force increases by 550,000 workers every year and say rapid changes must be made to find them jobs.

They put Egypt's unemployment level as high as 20 to 25 per cent. The labour force swelled by around seven per cent when Iraq invaded Kuwait in August and thousands of workers returned from the Gulf.

U.N. predicts new energy crisis without expanded oil production

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United Nations warned Monday that because of the Gulf crisis the world could face a new energy crisis in a few years because of increasing demand for oil without increasing production.

"With increasing oil demand and no adequate action to expand production capacities, in a few years another energy crisis could be upon us," said U.N. Undersecretary-General Rafiquddin Ahmed, in charge of international economic and social affairs. He made the comments in a speech to the U.N. Committee on Natural Resources.

The coffee pact that collapsed in 1989 was designed to push up prices by limiting how much each producing country could export, rather like the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) caps oil exports. Unlike OPEC, most consumer countries are also members of the pact and have a say in discussions.

barrels per day, with demand at 24 million barrels per day.

Energy projections to the year 2000 and beyond by the World Energy Council, the International Energy Agency and the U.N. Secretariate indicate that demand for OPEC oil, especially from the Gulf, will increase substantially, he said.

That is because of stagnation in production in non-OPEC developing countries and a continuing reduction in oil output in the United States and the Soviet Union, he explained.

Despite their vast and proved oil reserves, Ahmed said, questions arise about the ability of OPEC countries to expand production, since most of them were experiencing financial problems. There is a clear need for international cooperation to ensure long-term stability in the oil markets, Ahmed said.

The International Energy Agency, he said, had ample strategic oil reserves and commercial stockpiles. But the developing world and Eastern European nations had no stocks of their own and suffered from the shortfall resulting from the embargo on Iraq.

He said that at the same time incremental oil revenues benefited oil exporting countries, \$32 billion for OPEC members, \$6 billion for non-OPEC oil exporting developing countries and \$4 billion to \$5 billion for Canada, Norway, Britain and the Soviet

Union.

Ahmed said that the U.N. embargo covering oil exports from Iraq and Kuwait cut off more than four million barrels per day of exports, or seven per cent of the world's consumption.

For a while this resulted in a doubling and tripling of oil prices, with resultant shocks upon many national economies, Ahmed said.

In 1990, he said, the Gulf crisis

caused an additional oil import outlay of about \$43 billion, including \$33 billion from the developed market economies, \$2 billion from Eastern Europe and \$8 billion from oil importing countries of the developing world.

Because of their high dependence on oil, low per capita income, foreign indebtedness and lack of foreign exchange, he said, the impact was felt especially in Eastern Europe and the developing world.

Loans, credits from the International Monetary Fund and other multilateral arrangements, plus bilateral assistance from oil exporting developing nations helped mitigate the problem, he said.

But in many countries this aid did not prevent shortages, rationing and a drop in economic output. "The vulnerability of these countries to oil crises calls for the serious attention and consideration of the international community," Ahmed said.

In a report the council said that "the education and training systems are not adapted to the labour market" and "the economy is not keeping up with population growth."

The situation has been aggravated by economic problems caused by the Gulf crisis and

Morocco adopts plan to employ 100,000 jobless

RABAT (R) — The Moroccan government has adopted a plan to find jobs for 100,000 unemployed high school and university graduates by the end of this year, the official news agency MAP said Tuesday.

The ambitious plan was approved at a meeting of the National Youth and Future Council chaired by King Hassan at the royal palace Monday night.

The 21-point plan proposes to find jobs for half of the graduates between April 15 and the end of July, and for the remainder by the end of the year.

The council was set up to tackle the problem of the growing number of graduates unable to find jobs, said to have been partly responsible for riots that erupted in several cities last December in protest against economic hardships.

The council proposed 21 measures to streamline the bureaucracy, eliminate superfluous documents and useless procedures," prune the "proliferation of investment rules," and speed up project authorisations.

In the burgeoning private sector, the council's census showed that more than 70,000 new jobs would be created in the next three years.

"But it found that only 12,000 graduates were interested in the 21,700 private sector jobs, including 14,000 in industry, on offer this year.

The census counted 100,374 jobless graduates, 61 per cent of them men and 59 per cent between the ages of 25 and 29.

China increases military spending despite deficit

PEKING (AP) — China will increase its defence spending by nearly 13 per cent this year to modernise arms and equipment despite a serious budget deficit, the Finance Minister said Tuesday.

It marks the second straight year of sharply increased military spending, reflecting the leadership's perception of growing threats to Communist rule from within and without.

The draft 1991 budget presented by Finance Minister Wang Bingqian to the annual session of the National People's Congress included an overall five per cent increase in government spending.

"The proposed budget is 35.7 billion yuan (\$6.7 billion), which would be up from the 33.95 billion yuan (\$6.3 billion) spent last year.

Military spending for 1991 would be 32.5 billion yuan (\$6.25 billion), or 9.1 per cent of the total budget.

Wang said sales taxes will be raised from the current 3 per cent to 5 per cent and some price subsidies will be reduced, but he still projected a 13.3-billion-yuan (\$2.5 billion) deficit for the year.

Based on past experience, the actual deficit could be larger. Wang disclosed that the actual 1990 deficit was a record 15 billion yuan (\$2.8 billion), while the 1990 budget had projected only an 8.9-billion-yuan deficit.

Nearly one-third of central government revenues in 1990 were used to bail out failing state enterprises, he reported.

"We are faced with an extremely grim situation and an arduous task," he told the more than 2,600 congress delegates assembled in the Great Hall of the People.

"The basic solution to our financial problems... is to have a bigger 'cake' by developing production (and) improving efficiency," he said, reiterating what Chinese leaders have been saying for several years.

Japan lends Philippines \$900 million

MOSCOW (R) — A new economic reform programme for the Soviet Union's giant Russia Federation was unveiled Tuesday but the republic's prime minister warned it stood no chance of success unless striking miners went back to work.

The programme is designed to introduce a market economy in the shortest possible time by privatising state assets, cutting taxes to encourage entrepreneurs and relaxing rules on foreign investment.

Goto said the Japanese assistance "should be used in a most appropriate manner," such as improving the climate for implementing foreign aid through structural reforms in the economy. He did not elaborate.

Project loans, including those for building roads, ports and water supply, account for about 70 per cent of the package. The remainder includes programme loans for the development of the fisheries, transport and environmental sectors.

The miners' strike, which has shut a quarter of the country's 600 pits, is crippling vital heavy industries. The strikers want more money and better living conditions, as well as the resignation of President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Silayev visited miners at the giant Siberian Kuzbass field, the

largest in Russia, over the weekend and said he had urged them to support the reform programme.

"I assured them that should we destroy the economy by continuing the strike we would not be able to put this programme into practice," he said.

The programme is a modified version of the radical countryside "500-day" plan, which the republic adopted last November but abandoned after the Soviet government decided to introduce more conservative reforms.

"We believe there should be an energetic transition to a market economy in a very short time," Silayev said.

But the programme — which envisages the transformation of state industries into share-holding companies — is unlikely to find favour with the Soviet government.

Gorbachev wants the republics to sign a new union treaty giving them more control over their resources but leaving ultimate control of key sectors in the hands of the centre.

"We want the major share of income from oil, coal, gas in the Russian Federation, which produces over 90 per cent of the country's output," Silayev said.

Silayev has held several meetings with Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov to resolve these questions. He said the talks had not given great cause for optimism — "but I am not giving up hope."

Russian leader Boris Yeltsin has refused to sign the draft treaty until it is changed to give Russia more sovereignty.

"Should we succeed, Russia will become a strong economic part of a renewed union. This will benefit everyone," Silayev said.

The programme, which will run from April 1991 until the end of 1992, has to be approved by the republic's supreme legislature, the Congress of Peoples' Deputies, which opens a special session Thursday.

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Mali leader toppled in coup

Ruling military council wants democracy

ABIDJAN (R) — The leader of anti-government protests in Mali which led to President Moussa Traore's arrest said Tuesday the ruling military council wanted to install democracy.

"Mali is at the hour of renewal," Demba Diallo, head of the Malian League of Human Rights, said on Malian radio monitored in neighbouring Ivory Coast.

Diallo, who led protests which resulted in 150 demonstrators being killed by the military and police, said members of the newly-formed National Reconciliation Council (NRC) agreed at a meeting Tuesday morning to end military rule and permit democracy.

He said the council had agreed to a national conference and to form a transitional government.

The council, headed by Lieutenant-Colonel Amadou Toumani Toure, announced on Mali Radio earlier that it had

arrested Traore, whom it denounced for heading a "blood-thirsty and corrupt regime" and his wife Mariam.

The council imposed an overnight curfew from 2100 GMT to 0500 GMT, closed the frontiers, shut the international airport in the capital Bamako and suspended the constitution.

Later broadcasts said the council consisted of 17 members, all from the military.

The radio played a recording of a rally Diallo apparently held earlier in Bamako before enthusiastic supporters who cheered the end of Traore's 22-year rule.

On the tape, Diallo could be heard yelling in hoarse voice: "Assassin" and "we are united."

"Moussa Traore treated the Malian people like imbeciles," Diallo told a radio interviewer. "He took power by violence and he held on by violence."

Diallo said that by preventing

Traore from leaving the country, the government could try to recover money the military leader had stashed in Swiss bank accounts.

He said that when Traore was arrested Monday night by paratroopers, the president had said: "My fate is now in God's hands."

Diplomats and opposition sources said at least 150 people were killed in four days of riots when Traore's government ordered security forces to open fire on demonstrators in Bamako.

"The security of people and their property will be assured," Toure said in the broadcast.

"It is time for an end to corruption, nepotism and speculation," he said and called for vigilance and reconciliation.

His taped message was repeated at regular intervals.

An earlier broadcast said Traore's ruling Democratic Union of the Malian People for democratic reform.

(UDPM) was being disbanded and the constitution suspended.

Reuter correspondent Gill Tudor, reporting from Bamako before international communications were cut early Tuesday, said Traore had been arrested by paratroopers and was being held at a military airbase.

"Considering the stubbornness of the Traore government... we of the armed forces have decided to form the NRC to put an end to the bloodthirsty regime of Traore," the broadcast said.

It appealed for calm and asked citizens "to cooperate to make a success of the change by avoiding looting."

The broadcast said steps would be taken to establish a multi-party system in the impoverished, mostly desert state where Traore's government was one of the last holding out against demands sweeping West Africa for democratic reform.

S. Koreans vote in 1st local elections in 30 years

SEOUL (AP) — Only about half the eligible voters cast ballots Tuesday in South Korea's first local elections in 30 years.

It was the lowest voter turnout in history, following a lackluster campaign marred by scandal and voter apathy.

Shortly after the polls closed, the Central Election Management Committee said a preliminary count showed just 51.7 per cent of the 24 million eligible voters went to the polls.

If the final figure is higher, it will fall far below the previous record low turnout of 72.1 per cent for direct general elections in 1963.

President Roh Tae-Woo said earlier Tuesday that the campaign had been the nation's fairest ever, and called this a sign that democratisation, begun when he took office in February 1988, was taking root.

"I thank the people for the most exemplary and fair election in our history," he said while visiting the site of new local council legislature.

The implementation of local autonomy will bring a big change in the conduct of our state affairs and promote the diversification and localisation of society," he said.

Past campaigns have been marred by charges of fraud, corruption and bribes. Even the leader of the top opposition Party for Peace and Democracy, Kim Daesung, said the elections "mark the day when true democracy is revived."

Public outrage over a water pollution scandal and distrust of political parties involved in a major bribery scandal marred the 18-day campaign. Observers found voters to be apathetic and distrustful of politicians.

The SPD is keen not to blame the chancellor for all eastern Germany's woes.

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"Silavathurai is about to fall," the Tigers said in a statement.

No independent verification of the differing claims made by both sides was available.

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The sources said about 10 battalions numbering 8,000 to 10,000 soldiers had been deployed in the offensive which began after rebels attacked the army camps last week.

"The operation was planned for end-March but had to be brought forward because of the unexpected rebel attacks," an army source, who declined to be named.

He said troops, backed by air cover, were on the move from Mannar on Sri Lanka's northwest coast and Wel Oya on the northeast coast to link up with soldiers moving north from Vavuniya in the centre.

The troops had met stiff resistance in the coast-to-coast operation covering a distance of 130 kilometres, but no casualties

were reported, he said.

On March 19, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas, fighting for a separate state for minority Tamils, pounded two army camps at Kokupadayam and Silavathurai in Mannar with mortar bombs, small arms fire and grenades for three successive nights.

Troops repulsed the attacks, military sources said.

The military said at least 300 rebels were killed in the fighting at Mannar. It said 115 bodies of rebels, some female, were lying outside the camps.

But the Tigers said only 20 of their fighters were killed while 50 soldiers died.

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